

SPECIAL  
DIRECTIONS

Teaching how  
TO PRAY,  
Vpon severall Occasions :

Alwayes preferring THE LORDS  
PRAYER (recorded by the blessed  
Evangelists) for an absolute  
patterne.

Written by I. F.



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## Touching that forme of Prayer called *The Lords Prayer.*

**F**irst, it is certaine, that the treasures of wisdom and knowledge being hid in Iesus Christ, who set it downe; it is a most perfect form and rule of prayer unto which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can bee taken away. Col. 2. 3. Math. 6. 9. 13. Rev. 22. 18. 19.

2. Therefore also no Angels or men (who whatsoever they have, receive it of his fulnesse) are ever able to attaine to the setting downe of the like. Ioh. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 13. 9. Heb. 1. 6. 7.

3. If they doe or shall set downe any other forme we must not regard or follow it, but keepe our selves onely to this rule which Christ our Lord hath prescribed. Math. 6. 9. 13. and 15. 9. and 28. 20. with Gal. 1. 8. 9.

4. In this Christ hath taught us, 1. to whom to pray, that is to God onely, and not to any Angell or Saint whatsoever. 2. With what affection, that is, with faith and confidence of his willingnesse to hear and helpe us, as being our Father, and of his ability thereunto (together with due regard of his Majesty) as being in heaven, and therefore full of glory, and able

Luk. 11. 11. 13  
Psal. 115.

Eccles. 5. 1.

Of this judgement is Mr.

Calvin, Beza,

Ursinus. Piscator, and those

of our owne

nation which

translated the

Bible into

Engl ish, at

Geneva, as

may be scene

in their notes

commentaries

and expositi-

ons of this

form of praier

Mat. 6. 9. 13.

able to doe whatsoever he will. 3. For what things, whether they concerne Gods glory, or our owne benefit, according to the severall occasions and necessities which God ministreth & layeth upon us. 4. What difference we should make of the things, and of our desire after them according to their severall natures. 5. The end of all, that God in and over all may bee glorified.

All which directions are comprised in few words, but such as fully and plainly teach and comprehend them all even whatsoever is needfull to be knowne and observed in calling upon the name of God: hereupon it is that all the prayers recorded in the Scriptures, which the men of God upon so severall occasions have offered up unto him, are comprised in, and may bee reduced to this forme of prayer, although they did not use the very fillables & frame of words here set down, but which also may be gathered both that this is a most absolute rule and forme of prayer, and that the right use of it is to conceive and frame all our prayers according to this rule, and not to bee bound to use this number of words, as many now adayes in their ignorance and superstition doe imagine.

If it be objected that Christ said, *When ye pray, say Our Father, &c.* and therefore that we ought in praier to repeat these words: I answer, 1. That the Scripture sheweth his meaning was not at all to binde us to the use of these fillables, but that in praier and thanksgiving wee should follow this direction and patternne which hee gave: so we reade in Matthew, *that Christ said, After this manner pray ye,* (and not as

Luke 11.2.

Matth. 6.9.



men now would have it) say over these words.

Secondly, seeing this is an absolute form of prayer wherein is no want or vaine repetition, if Christs meaning were to binde us to the use of these words, why then should we use any other? why should wee not alway use these, and these onely? yea what else were it but vaine babbling and intollerable presumption, to put other prayers in stead of this which is so absolute and perfit?

Mat. 6. 9. 13.

Luke 11. 1. 4.

3. It is to be minded that this forme of prayer being recorded in two places of Scripture, there neither is all the same words, nor the same number of words mentioned in both places; now then according to which of these two must wee say it? if according to *Luke* his recording of it, then shall we offend against that of *Matthew*, and contrarily, if we bee tied to the number and order of the words, as they are set downe.

Exod. 10. 1. 17.

Deut. 5. 6, 21.

4. As God in giving the morall Law (albeit hee did fully and shortly declare his will in those tenne Commandements, yet) did not binde the Prophets and Priests in their ministry to use those very words but as occasion required, according unto them, to shew the people what they ought to doe or leave undone: so Christ also giving this forme of prayer, albeit hee hath therein fully and shortly taught us all things needfull for prayer, yet hath not bound us in calling upon God to use these words, but in all things according to this rule to make our requests unto God with giving of thanks.

Act. 1. 24. and  
4. 24.

5. It is without question that the Apostles to whom this rule was first given, were carefull to keepe it according

cording to the true meaning of Christ, but they nei-  
 ther tied themselves to these words, but alway praied  
 as they had severall occasions, according to this rule:  
 neither when they wrote unto others concerning  
 prayer, did they ever teach them to say over the  
 Lords Prayer, which doubtlesse they would have  
 done, had they so taken the will of Christ to bee, but  
 they taught and exhorted them stil according to their  
 necessities and occasions in all things to shew their  
 requests unto God in all manner prayer and suplica-  
 tion in the spirit with giving of thanks; and hereunto  
 to watch with all perseverance because this is the will  
 of God in Christ Iesus.

Math. 14. 13.  
 2 Cor. 12. 8.  
 Eph. 3. 14. 21.  
 Phil. 1. 9. 10.  
 Rev. 22. 20.  
 Phil. 4. 6.  
 Eph. 6. 18.  
 1 Thes. 5. 17.

6. If the Apostles had been bound or might have tied  
 themselves to these or any other set formes of words  
 then they had not given a sufficient reason why in this  
 respect with other, it was not meet they should attend  
 unto the Deacons Office because they would give  
 themselves as to the Ministracion of the word, so also  
 unto prayer: for it had been easy for them to have  
 said by roate or to have read out of a booke this or  
 any other set forme of prayer.

Rom. 18. 15.  
 30. 31. 32.  
 2 Thes. 3. 1. 2.  
 1 Tim. 2. 1. 2. 3.  
 1 Tim. 1. 5. 6.  
 and 5. 13.  
 1 Pet. 4. 7.  
 1 John 5. 14.  
 15.

7 They which thinke Christ hath tyed us to say  
 these words, and that such saying of the words is true  
 prayer, must reconcile herewith the Apostles speech  
 when he saith, we know not what to pray as we ought,  
 but the spirit it selfe maketh request for us with  
 groines that cannot be expressed, these men it semeth  
 would answer, yes, we know what to pray, to wit, the  
 Lords prayer, which containeth whatsoever we need  
 to aske; and what then need the spirit teach us what  
 to pray as we ought?

Jude vers. 20.  
 Acts 6. 2. 4.  
 Rom 8. 6.

1 Cor. 14. 16.

8. The Apostle speaking of prayer in a strange tongue, saith thus : When thou blessest, how shall he that occupieth the roome of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he knoweth not what thou speakest; now if they had bene tied to the use of these words of praier, or to any other set stinted words, they might have answered yes, wee know what hee saith when hee praieyth or giveth thanks, it is the Lords prayer, or some stinted prescribed prayer, which we know aforehand, and therefore unto it, though it be spoken in a strange tongue we can say Amen.

Rom. 8. 26.

Eph. 27. 6.

Jude 18. 20.

1 Sam. 1. 12.

Jam. 15. 1. 5.

and 5. 13.

1 Pet. 2. 5.

9. If the saying over of these, or of any stinted words were true prayer, then might a man have his prayers by rote, or carry them in his pocket, or buy them at the Stationers shops, &c. which were strange to imagine of true prayer, which is the worke of Gods Spirit in our hearts, teaching and enabling us to powre out our soules unto God in all necessities, and occasions, and so to offer up spirituall sacrifices acceptable to God through Iesus Christ.

Luke 11. 13.

Matth. 24. 20.

10. When as Christ promisseth that our heavenly Father will give the Holy Ghost to them that aske it of him, and elsewhere speaking of the destruction of Ierusalem, saith, Pray that your flight bee not in the winter, and the like : these things being to be prayed for, and yet not these words not set down in that forme of prayer, sheweth that Christ hath not tied us to repeat over these words, but to pray after that rule according to our wants and occasions.

11. The words are so generall as unlesse they be some way opened, and particularly applied, divers

men



men will diversly understand them : for example , if these words, Thy Kingdome come, be used onely in generall, without any explication, the Papist understandeth them, of the advancement of Gods Kingdome in and by their religion; the Protestant understandeth and intendeth them of the cleane contrary, and so in the rest ; neither can any man for himselfe use them aright, without some speciall application to his particular estate and occasion, because no one mans faith and understanding can attaine unto all things needfull for all occasions, times and persons, as those words doe comprehend.

12. If these words, Say ye &c. must be taken and pressed according to the letter, then would follow that in prayer, wee should alway speake with the tongue, whereas there is prayer often in the Spirit alone, without any words, or distinct voice at all ; as we read that *Moses, Hezekiah, Nehemiah, Anna*, and others, have so praied, and beene accepted of God.

Exod. 14. 15.

Esay 38. 14.

Nehem. 2. 4.

1 Sam. 1. 13.

Rom. 8. 26. 27.

13. Christ hath given an expresse commandement, when ye pray, say, Our Father, whereupon I reason thus: the Commandements of Christ are to be kept, otherwise it is sinne; therefore if Christ have here commanded to use these words in that number and order, then whosoever pray any time, and use not these words, they sin : but already we have seene the Apostles praied, and used not these words, and yet sinned not; and so no doubt doe other the servants of God daily, according to their divers occasions and conditions: not to speake here of the prayers which the Preachers use afore and after their Sermons, neither of their Collects, and other prayers besides

Luke 11. 12.

besides this prescribed in their bookes, otherwise, also every man that bleſſeth his table, or saith to another God be with you, God bleſſe you, God recover you, good morrow, good night, or the like, should sinne in this, because he praieſh, and yet ſaith not Our Father, &c.

John 12.28.

Mat. 26.42.

14. Yet I doubt not but we may use any of these as well as other words, applying them to our speciall case and necessity, as we see that Christ praied, saying, Father glorifie thy name: and againe, O my Father if this cup cannot passe from me but that I must drinke it, thy will bee done; where wee may learne by Christ who gave the rule how to use it, to wit, not in a superfluous saying over these words but in praying according to this rule, as our speciall necessities shall be, whether we use any of these words or other, or pray with sighes that cannot be expressed.

15. Finally, therefore all such as have framed or received any other forme of prayer but this onely which Christ hath taught, offend against this rule and commandement of Christ; and thus not we, but they who have devised and follow other formes and bookes of praiers, are those which deny, and as much as lieth in them ditanull the Lords Praier.

*FINIS.*